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STRICTURES

ON THE PROPOSED

UNION

BETWEEN

GREAT-BRITAIN and IRELAND.

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GREAT-BRITAIN and IRELAND;

WITH

OCCASIONAL REMARKS.

BY

NICHOLAS GAY, ESQ. F. R. S.

QUI MORES HOMINUM MULTORUM VIDIT ET URBES.—HOR.

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STRICTURES, &c.

IN this age of politics, when every man ſo freely gives his opinion by word, writing, or in print, I'll e'en take up the pen, enter the liſts, and as freely give my ſentiments on this great and momentous ſubject, an incorporating union between Great Britain and Ireland; a ſubject which in that kingdom is a principal topic—the terror and fears of ſome, but the hopes and ſanguine wiſhes of many more. To this latter claſs I moſt cordially join my mite of ſuffrage, as, from the firſt day I ever heard it mentioned, I never had a more unequivocal and decided opinion, that it was the happieſt

thought and the beſt poſſible meaſure that could take place in the preſent criſis, and I bleſſed the hands that firſt introduced and brought it forward. And this I did, under the firmeſt conviction that this meaſure alone was not only neceſſary to the ſalvation of Ireland, but that the kingdom was loſt without it; nay more, that it was a neceſſary meaſure eventually to ſave Great Britain.

But, before I proceed any farther, as I am a very private individual, and little known to the public eye, having paſſed my life in the retired circle of my friends, I think I ſhall here follow the good Spectator's advice, that whoever offers himſelf to the world in print, the public have a right to know ſomewhat about him, ſome general outlines of his character, &c. as his birth, parentage, life, and education; he even goes ſo far, I think, as to deſcribe his countenance

tenance, that he has a round ſhort face, &c. I ſhall not be ſo minute, my face and perſon being of ſuch little conſequence to the public, and ſtill leſs to my ſubject; but I ſhall juſt tell them that I was born in Ireland, am originally of an Engliſh family who ſettled in that kingdom the middle of the laſt century. I now, from private family motives, of no conſequence to any one but myſelf, reſide here, and here moſt probably ſhall live and die. The family eſtate, of about three thouſand pounds a year, I found, at my father's death, twenty years ago, much impaired. He was a hoſpitable generous man, but improvident. However, what ſtill remains is to me, a ſingle man, an ample independent competency, fully ſufficient to all the neceſſaries of life, and even to ſome of its luxuries. Being of a very active and itinerant diſpoſition, and having nothing elſe to do, I ſet out (though then paſt fifty,

when the hey-day in the blood is over, and reaſon more matured) on one of the moſt extenſive continental tours, that I believe few men have made. Viſiting with a good deal of attention for the ſpace of eight years the whole of Europe (with ſome part of Aſia), from Malta to Peterſburgh, and from London to Conſtantinople, and yet not ſatisfied with all theſe peregrinations, I am juſt now returned from a four months excurſion, of about twelve hundred miles, through theſe two kingdoms.

Theſe are my credentials; and thus furniſhed and thus equipped, I think I have as fair pretenſions to give my opinion on the ſubject of an Union as many others who have publiſhed their's. It ſhall not be very long, as in my mind the whole of this argument lies in a very narrow compaſs. Lord Shafteſbury remarks, that in the way of

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reaſon as much may be ſaid in a folio ſheet as in a folio volume.

After ſome years abſence from my native land, I lately paid it a viſit, and in different excurſions travelled over the greater part of the kingdom, and that with ſome attention. I there found that the union was the univerſal topic; and by ſome it was, I own, moſt ſeverely, moſt virulently, and moſt bitterly handled, in the ſtrongeſt poſſible terms, as the baſeſt of all meaſures, fraught with ruin, deſtruction, nay almoſt the diſſolution of the country. It would ruin trade, ruin Dublin, ruin the people. The honor, the character, the independency of the nation would be loſt, No court, no balls at the caſtle, &c. &c. That fine building, the parliament houſe, after ſo much expence, was to become uſeleſs. Some were very clamorous againſt the meaſure, as brought forward

forward at an improper period; it was premature and ill-timed, when rebellion, tumult, religious rancour, &c. overſpread the land. Here I differed from them totally and diametrically. This was the time, I aſſert it, the true time, the only time: in a ſeaſon of loyalty, unanimity, peace, and proſperity, it might not be ſo neceſſary. Thoſe that are well need not a phyſician, but thoſe that are ſick: and ſuch was our caſe, very ſick indeed, nor yet by any means recovered, nor ever ſhall, without an union. What had their parliament done, to be thus taken from them, &c &c. &c. with much more in the like ſtrain; all which I confeſs, for want no doubt of quick intellects on my part, made no great impreſſion upon me. I rather thought it *vox et præterea nihil*, except in the laſt article, what had their parliament done. Here I fully agreed with them: not much

much indeed! And to this anſwer I was very fully competent, having ſo lately travelled through the country, and attentively viewed its face, ſituation, &c. and to this particular I will entreat my reader's cloſe attention, as on this criterion the preſent ſituation, ſtate and face of the country, will reſt my whole argument in favor of an union. It is the very being, end and aim, the very head and front on which this ſubject for and againſt an union will unqueſtionably reſt.

With theſe men, theſe violent anti-unioniſts, I uſed to reaſon, that I really could not ſee this meaſure in the ſtrong light they repreſented it: nor that all this deſtruction, deſolation and woe would be attendant on it; and this I obſerved, from the plaineſt of all reaſons, Whoſe intereſt can it be to thus deſtroy and ſubdue this kingdom? It cannot be the intereſt of England, that is impoſſible

poſſible: for the more you flouriſh, the greater will be their advantages. They would be richer, ſtronger, more powerful, &c. juſt in the ſame proportion. In this light England certainly views it, and in the fulneſs of the beſt intentions and beſt wiſhes for the proſperity, peace, honor and happineſs of Ireland, it is thus brought forward, recommended and adviſed. And by whom? Not your enemies certainly: that is impoſſible: no! but much, very much the contrary.

England, your ſiſter kingdom, your beſt friend, in whom you live, and move, and have your being, the joint legiſlature of England, they, I ſay, offer to unite with you; they, in the moſt warm, kind, and friendly manner, invite you to this Union; an Union with what? With the firſt nation in the world! And all this recommended

by

by whom? By one of the beſt kings that ever ſwayed the Engliſh ſceptre! The father of his people! A truly good conſtitutional and patriotic king. And this I aſſert in the teeth of all jacobins; and I further predict that at his demiſe (late, very late indeed may that fatal event take place for the bleſſing and happineſs of, I hope e'er long to ſay, his three united kingdoms) his epitaph will be *Here lies a patriot King*. And this king moſt fortunately aſſiſted, counſelled and adviſed by the beſt, wiſeſt, truly conſtitutional, patriotic, and efficient miniſtry, (this I aſſert and will prove) that ever guided the helm of the ſtate; and this I ſay in direct contradiction to Mr. Fox and all his wordy declamations,* as alſo to his young nephew

* The great Dr. Berkeley, biſhop of Cloyne (who by the way was my very near relation) in his excellent maxims concerning patriotiſm, printed ſome years ſince, ſays, "We are not to think every clamorous haranguer, or every ſplenetic repiner againſt

in the houſe of lords, and their aſſociates. They are, indeed, thank God, few in number, hardly worth being counted, and much leſs being weighed, but, peace to their manes, they are dead, and ſo is my enmity; I war not with the duſt. They are indeed dead, buried and forgotten; never again to riſe, and no loſs for any good they have done, nay I fear much the contrary, a great deal of miſchief. But this I leave to better pens, and I wiſh ſome ſuch would take it up; it is an ample and a copious ſubject.

I ſhall juſt here obſerve, that in thus introducing theſe gentlemen they cannot ſuppoſe I mean them the leaſt perſonal offence —far be it from me. I ſpeak of them in their political characters as members of parliament, public men, and as they have often

a court, is therefore a patriot." Theſe are his words, the book is now before me. They are very appoſite and ſtrong in the preſent caſe; and again he ſays, "The factious man is apt to miſtake himſelf for a patriot."

very

very freely done of others. In their private life I dare ſay they are very worthy, very amiable, and ſo indeed have I heard, but in their public conduct I think them highly cenſurable.

Some may ſay this eulogy, this juſt praiſe of our miniſtry is flattery. I deny it. Truth is not flattery. I have not the honour of the leaſt perſonal acquaintance with any one of them; and again what could my poor mite of praiſe add to ſuch exalted characters? Nothing, not a jot. They deſerve well of their country. So I think, ſo I ſpeak, and in full, irrefragable and indiſputable proof of this aſſertion, I will aſk a few queſtions. Was this nation ever more decidedly unanimous in their love, loyalty, prayers and good wiſhes for their king? Never! Was the commerce of this nation at any other period of time at a greater heighth than at preſent? Never! This is allowed. Were our arms ever

greater or more ſucceſsful by ſea or land, in Euroye, Africa, and the Eaſt? Our nautical achievements almoſt paſs credence, and will hordly be believed in a future age. Led on by our gallant admirals, their ſpirited officers, and brave tars, they are invincible. Or did we ever, I aſk it, at any other æra, more glorioufly aſſert, or more ſtrenuouſly maintain, our paramount empire over the ocean? Never! never! If theſe be not proofs of a good, a wiſe and an efficient miniſtry, I know not what are; and yet this good miniſtry, which thus prudently conducts the affairs of England, are all a parcel of rogues leagued and united for the utter ruin and deſtruction of Ireland, by the introduction and recommendation of this vile union. For with theſe anti-unioniſts ruin, deſtruction, and union are ſynonimous terms. And further, theſe wicked miniſters, from the fulneſs of their malice againſt this poor

kingdom,

kingdom, have ſeduced and brought over our worthy lord lieutenant to join the plot, for in his laſt ſpeech on the prorogation of the Iriſh parliament, he fully and ſtrongly, in the moſt polite, amiable, and friendly terms, recommends this union as the beſt poſſible meaſure for the peace, proſperity, and happineſs of Ireland. Yet this man, one of the greateſt characters of the age, and among the foremoſt for every civil and military virtue, comes like a thief in the night, forfeits his fair fame and well-earned praiſe, and joins in the wicked league to ruin, ſubvert, and utterly deſtroy this country which he governs, which he loves, and where he is adored.

All this, I own, is too laughable, too ridiculous, and I am almoſt aſhamed to mention it; yet ſtrange as it is, I have heard ſuch language, nor could I account for it, but that in politics I have ſometimes found

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a certain perverſeneſs, an obliquity of intellects with ſome men, that nothing will perſuade, no truth convince: they are like the deaf adder, they will not hear.

With ſuch I never argue long; I leave them to themſelves. With others more ductile I endeavoured to reaſon them out of this belief, that all was leagued againſt them. No ſuch thing, ſay I, but juſt the contrary, the very reverſe of what you ſuppoſe; there is no treachery meant nor intended; all is done with the beſt poſſible intention, and for the ſole view and advantage of the Iriſh nation. That thoſe who adviſed it did it from the beſt motives, ſeeing, as they muſt, the preſent ſtate of the kingdom, the late invaſions and conſequent rebellion, they thence naturally ſaw that ſomething was very wrong, ſomething rotten in the ſtate; that ſomething ſhould be done, ſome new meaſures taken, and that

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an union, and an union alone, would be efficient: and there they were certainly right. I repeat it again and again, nothing ſhort of that will ſave the nation. Thus I reaſoned, and thus I argued. Some I convinced, others were obdurate, and nothing could perſuade them but that ruin and union were one and the ſame thing; but they are, I am ſure, much miſtaken, and will on the day of trial be found, I have no doubt, light in the balance.

Having ſaid thus much, I will now adduce my reaſons why I am ſo ſanguine in my hopes and wiſhes for an union, firm and laſting between Great Britain and Ireland, which, after ſome years abſence, I have lately viſited, travelled over the greater part, and I muſt freely own, and ſorry I am to ſay it, I cannot report any very favourable picture; I ſaw no great improvement, not much meliorated ſince I left it. Little

progreſſive

progreſſive. I ſaw no new towns ariſe, nor enlargement of old, but the contrary; dilapidations in ſome, no great increaſe of gentlemens' houſes, rather the reverſe; for many of them were ſacked, pillaged, and deſtroyed, by the late horrid, infamous, cruel, bloody, and diſgraceful rebellion, an everlaſting blot to Iriſh annals. No great increaſe of commerce, manufactures, &c. and ſo I was told by others in that line that there was very little. I ſaw few new plantations, hedges, or incloſures, and yet theſe are great additional beauties to all countries. The inns in general were very bad: I will not deſcribe them, but I felt them. I did not perceive that the ſtate of the poor and the peaſantry was in any thing bettered: and I will freely here declare, that the poor and peaſantry of Ireland are the worſt clothed, the worſt fed, and the worſt lodged, of any in Europe; and this I ſay from ocular conviction.

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The houſe, or rather hut, of an Iriſh peaſant, is the cave of famine, dirt, rags, and naſtineſs; and in this every gentleman in the kingdom that I ſpoke to on the ſubject fully agreed with me. Thouſands without ſhoes or ſtockings; all which are ſurely ſtrong criterions, query whether they are not the beſt, to form a juſt judgment of the proſperity or poverty of a nation. And here I cannot help citing a very apt quotation or two, and fully corroborative of my opinion on this point, taken from one of the greateſt men and beſt Iriſh patriots of this age, no leſs than the great Dr. Berkeley, Biſhop of Cloyne, in his book called the Queriſt, printed in the year 1750; he aſks "Whether the bulk of our Iriſh natives are not kept from thriving by that cynical content in dirt and beggary, which they poſſeſs to a degree *beyond any other people in Chriſtendom?*" Again he aſks, "Whether the

creating of wants be not the likelieſt way to produce induſtry in a people? and whether, If our peaſants were accuſtomed to eat beef and wear ſhoes, they would not be more induſtrious?" Theſe are his words: This was the ſtate of the poor near half a century ago, and it is in nothing ſince improved.

Again, I found drunkenneſs very prevalent, and whiſky ſtill kept its ſway—that baneful drug to Iriſh proſperity and Iriſh induſtry, and ſuch will it ever be till totally aboliſhed, or ſo modified as to render it above the purchaſe of the poor.

Seeing things thus, the preſent ſituation of Ireland, certainly not flattering nor flouriſhing, the ſtate of the poor, &c. &c. I reaſoned with myſelf, What is this? what can all this mean? Now, at the end of the eighteenth century, ſo little advanced, ſo little improved; comparatively with England,

land, nothing; though not many miles diſtant from each other, yet with a conſtant reſident parliament meeting in the capital five or ſix months in each year; yet, I again repeat it, ſo little done!

Here, on this circumſtance, and this alone, I reſt my whole argument in favour of an union; that though we have had a parliament for ſuch a ſeries of years annually aſſembling, conſulting, adviſing, &c. yet ſtill ſo backward. Add to this the late horrid rebellion that raged throughout the land, which, though for the preſent ſuppreſſed, I yet fear (but hope I am miſtaken) the embers ſtill are ſmoaking, not wholly extinguiſhed, nor ever will, I am convinced, till the union takes place. That will effectually extinguiſh them, and nothing elſe; and from the aſhes will, phœnix-like, ariſe Ireland regenerate, born anew, a work to

wonder at—progreſſively and in time another England!!!

So I pray, ſo I predict, and ſo I propheſy. We have gone on too long floundering; let us change hands, let us change meaſures; an union is ſtill offered to you; and by England, the greateſt kingdom now exiſting, in every poſſible idea, a world within itſelf, with wonders bleſſed!

I love the theme, and could fill a folio on the ſubject. I own myſelf an enthuſiaſtic admirer of this mighty empire, I believe the rather from my having ſeen all others, to which, take it for all in all, they are in truth but ſhades and ſhadows. She cordially invites you, holds out her arms to receive you; let us then embrace, ſeize the opportunity, unite with her in indiſſoluble bands; cordially, willingly, and ſincerely unite with England; and from that happy,

happy

happy day, may progreſſively be dated the proſperity of Ireland. My utmoſt ambition and my utmoſt wiſh is to aſſimilate Ireland to England, which can alone be accompliſhed by an union.

In this ſtatement I ſpeak of Ireland in its political light, its policy, its goverment, &c. for it poſſeſſes every phyſical advantage equally with England. Our ſoil is good; nay, Mr. Young I think ſays, in ſome inſtances, better. Our climate perhaps more moderate, more temperate, leſs extreme of heat and cold: noble lakes, fine rivers, the beſt bays and harbours, inferior to none. Yet, with all theſe advantages, what is our ſituation at this day, comparatively with our neighbours? how inferior! Does it not then moſt naturally follow, that there muſt be ſomething radically wrong in our political conſtitution, as it now exiſts? What then is our beſt ſpecific? I again and again

repeat

repeat it—an union, and that alone, can ſave us.

I ſhould here, in juſtice, obſerve, and with much pleaſure I relate it, that there is one part of the kingdom which differs materially from the reſt. The face of the country has a much better appearance, more populous, better planted, as about Armagh, Richill, Belfaſt, Lurgan, &c.; and here, the lower claſs are better fed, lodged, and clothed; more cleanly, but ſtill not enough ſo. I call nothing well enough, if it can be better; and nothing ſhort of Engliſh cleanlineſs will ſatisfy me. All theſe advantages are the reſult of commerce, that great and happy bleſſing that clothes the naked, feeds the poor, and enriches all; for here the linen trade (the vitals of Ireland) flouriſhes in its fulleſt ſcope. It is, I underſtand, moſtly carried on by the diſſenters, a race of men very honeſt, active,

induſtrious,

induſtrious, and of much commercial turn; and in this light are valuable members of the community, and well deſerving of public applauſe. But I have been told (I hope it is not true), that in their political principles they are not quite what they ought to be, fond of change, &c. and not, as firmly, attached to the government under which they live, as might be expected. I am ſure if this be ſo, it is highly reproachful, illiberal, ungenerous, and moſt ungrateful on their part, to make ſo bad a return to that government under which they have ſo long lived in peace, happineſs, and proſperity, protected and ſecure, and under which they have battened, fattened, and grown rich. Let me then here, as their beſt friend, adviſe them to reform, to take this hint, and become, as they ought, good and loyal ſubjects. It is their intereſt, as well as their duty, ſo to do. He that is not with

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us is againſt us, and ever will be ſuſpected. A word to the wiſe!

I muſt not conclude my ſubject without a quotation in favour of this meaſure, of very high authority indeed, and to which all anti-unioniſts ſhould bend the knee and bow; one of the greateſt geniuſes of that age, and the moſt ſincere and zealous patriot that Ireland ever gave birth to. I mean the great William Molyneux (who was my uncle). In his famous caſe of Ireland, dedicated to king William, he there expreſſes his wiſhes in favour of an union between the two kingdoms; and adds, "But this is a happineſs too great, I fear, for us to expect." Theſe are his words in the genuine edition printed a hundred years ago. I ſay genuine, as I have ſince been told, that a ſpurious edition has been printed with this paragraph left out. This is a mutilation with a vengeance! The book I ſaw is in the family library

library now in the poſſeſſion of his nephew, the preſent Sir Capel Molyneux. With this great authority on my ſide, I ſhall conclude with my moſt fervent wiſhes that this happy meaſure may take place, and that ſpeedily.

Having thus ſettled and ſecured the union, as I hope, my next page, as in duty bound, ſhall be filled with my beſt and moſt ſincere thanks to my friends in Ireland, for their many obliging civilities. They received me kindly, and treated me hoſpitably, for which I certainly do, and ever ſhall, retain a very juſt ſenſe; but hoſpitality is the characteriſtic of Iriſh gentlemen, and of the nation—ever ready kindly to receive the ſtranger and the traveller. And here, in particular, I muſt not omit my beſt thanks to my good Lord Primate, for his condeſcending attentions during ſome weeks that I paſſed at a friend's houſe in his grace's neighbourhood. Here is a man, an honor

to his cloth, to the church, and to the great ſtation he ſo worthily fills. Pious, learned, courteous, and affable. Nothing puffed up. A truly primitive biſhop; an example for all clergymen, from the higheſt to the loweſt, to look up to and copy after. And this is the univerſal voice of the nation, where he is honoured, loved, and eſteemed. Long, very long, may he enjoy his exalted ſituation, for the welfare of religion and the church; and for the happineſs of his fine numerous family. Nor do I know a man who more fully deſerves that high eulogy which Pope pays to his friend the biſhop of Cloyne, in the following lines:

"Ev'n in a biſhop I can ſpy deſert:
Secker is decent; Rundel has a heart;
Manners, with candour, are to Benſon given:
To Berkley, every virtue under heaven."

This praiſe, ſo juſtly due to Berkley, dead, is as juſtly due to Newcome, living.

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The Primate is a conſtant reſident in his dioceſe, except when his parliamentary duty calls him up to town; but he never leaves the kingdom.

Having mentioned reſidents, I ſhall juſt here obſerve, that I do not know a more cenſurable or a more reprehenſible character than a non-reſident clergyman, be he archbiſhop, biſhop, dean, or rector. It is big with miſchief, and a crying ſin againſt God and againſt man. They cannot ſurely ſuppoſe that the great ſtipends they enjoy, and the tythe of the land, was given them to ſpend it out of their dioceſe, much leſs out of the kingdom. and certainly not out of their pariſhes. I hope there are few or no delinquents. I particulariſe no man—*qui capit, ille facit*. Yet I have heard wicked laymen, complain, perhaps they were angry at paying tythes; which indeed I ſhould not much wonder at if the parſon did not reſide. The la-

bourer I freely allow is worthy of his hire; but I as freely contend that he ſhould do the duty. Of a biſhop or clergyman, who abſents himſelf from his dioceſe or his pariſh, I think it may fairly be concluded, that in ſuch a caſe they are not neceſſary to the hierarchy; that their place is a ſinecure, and ſhould be ſuppreſſed or they ſuperſeded. This is obvious; and ſo I take leave of my clerical friends, with my beſt and moſt hearty wiſhes for their proſperity, happineſs and duration, in both kingdoms, ſo long as they deſerve it by reſidence, good lives, and good works, by example as well as precept, and not a day longer. All this I ſay from my perfect zeal for the eſtabliſhed church, though I have not the leaſt pretenſions to ſaintſhip, yet no great ſinner I hope, and ſtill leſs a cynic. But I am thoroughly convinced that our eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment is the firſt in the world, and our religion the

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beſt founded on reaſon and common ſenſe, and that none other ſo forcibly inculcates piety, virtue, honor charity, and truth; and this wholly devoid of all mockery, mummery, bigotry, ſuperſtition, or prieſtcraft. Of what other church can ſo much be ſaid? I am therefore the more anxious for its preſervation.

On my return from Ireland, and landing at Holyhead, I took the old Cheſter Road, merely to viſit Liverpool, of which I had heard ſo much; and I was not indeed diſappointed. It is a wonderful place, a magnificent town, ſecond I believe to none in wealth and commerce, London excepted. Their noble docks and crowded ſhipping are really aſtoniſhing. To give ſome idea of its trade, I was aſſured, that in the courſe of ſeventeen days they lately remitted to the cuſtom-houſe of London, for duties, the enormous ſum of one hundred and thirty-two thou-

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ſand nine hundred and thirty-one pounds, ten ſhillings and ſeven pence; that there were many merchants worth an hundred thouſand pounds, and ſome conſiderably more, which may readily be conceived, when it is known that the houſe of Bayley, Taylor, and Co. netted (to uſe a commercial phraſe) laſt year to the amount of fifty-ſeven thouſand pounds, and there were many ſuch. Mr. Bolton, an African and Weſt India merchant here, gave in his income tax at twenty-two thouſand five hundred pounds a year; and Mr. Walker, they told me, makes from twenty to thirty thouſand a year by commiſſion buſineſs.

I repeat all this as it was related to me by gentlemen of the place with whom I dined at the ordinary with the ſtewards of the oratorio. The oratorio was then going on; it was performed for three ſucceſſive days: at the one I ſaw they told me there were

were ſixteen hundred in the church, at half a guinea a ticket, and in the evening the concert was crouded at the ſame price. I enquired about the population; ſome ſaid ſeventy, and others ninety thouſand: I believe the medium is the truth.

They have eleven noble churches, moſt of them built within theſe few years, and all I believe in the preſent century. Theſe are thy wonders, O Liverpool! Theſe thy works, O Commerce!

Here are ſeveral good inns: of theſe Bates's hotel is the firſt. The landlord told me he makes generally from fifty to ſixty beds. In this viſit to Liverpool I ſaw every man ſo active, ſo buſy, ſo happy, and ſo well employed, that it confirmed me in an opinion I have ever entertained, that among all the different claſſes of ſociety the life of a merchant is the happieſt, certainly one of the moſt uſeful, and I often lament that I

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was not bred one; daily growing rich and hourly occupied; theſe are great bleſſings. An Engliſh merchant is a great character, moſt uſeful to the ſtate, in all his dealings proverbial for integrity and punctuality, and this I found was the univerſal opinion throughout Europe.

From Liverpool I went to Birmingham, another great commercial town, and though inland, carries on a prodigious trade: the works of Mr. Bolton are amazing, and well worth a journey to ſee them. There are excellent theatres, muſic-rooms, &c. both here and at Liverpool. They were fitting up the great church for oratorios to be performed the following week. Here again, as at Liverpool, are many good inns, Mrs. Lloyd's hotel is the firſt: there are ſixty rooms all numbered with enamelled figures. She told me ſhe had expended above nine thouſand pounds, and ſtill meant to make

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great additions; the offices, ſtables, coach-houſes, &c. are all in the ſame proportion. This I give as a hint to Iriſh inn-keepers. In my ſurvey of theſe two towns, I fear I broke the commandment, for I own I coveted them and wiſhed them in Ireland, or at leaſt two ſuch; and I have been, perhaps, more prolix in theſe accounts, merely in the view and idea of ſtimulating my countrymen to go and do ſo likewiſe.

As I have my pen in hand and ſhall certainly never again reſume it on any political ſubject, I ſhall juſt make a few remarks (in which, I truſt, my countrymen will at leaſt give me credit for good intentions), as they occurred to me in my late tour through Ireland, which ſtill I offer with the utmoſt diffidence and deference to better judgments. I thought the roads in general, though good, hard, and firm, yet much too narrow, which is ſtill made more

dangerous from the large dikes or drains on either ſide. In England they have no dikes to their roads, which render them very ſafe and pleaſant; in Ireland they are very large, and in many inſtances an overturn muſt be inevitable death; I did indeed eſcape, though I ſometimes ſhuddered. The dikes ſhould be on the outſide of the road; and I have ſeen ſome few inſtances where this has taken place, as on ſome parts of the northern road towards Drogheda and Dundalk; and here I muſt remark, though ſome boaſted to me the fine breadth of this road, I believe from ſixty to ſeventy feet, yet I own I could not quite concur with them, I thought it too broad; I have no doubt it was well intended by the projector, but to what purpoſe ſo broad; I rather thought it a work of ſupererogation; all extreme is error. Is not this a great waſte of ground from tillage and paſ-

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ture; if all roads were to be of this breadth, what would be left for agriculture, &c.? I think I was told that this was only to take place where the mail coaches run; but this is not, in my mind, a good reaſon. I believe there are twenty mail coaches in England for one in Ireland, and ſo of other carriages in proportion; yet, on an average, I doubt that the roads of that kingdom are not more than from twenty-five to thirty feet (except in ſome inſtances, as approaches to great towns, London, &c.) and theſe without dikes, are ample for every poſſible purpoſe; and ſurely if this be ſufficient for England, Ireland need not look for more. I ſay ſo much pro bono publico, for as to myſelf, it is more than probable I may never again travel over them: I am now of a good round age, far advanced, and very poſſibly may be cut off before I can again reviſit my native ſoil, which ſtill ſhall have, to my lateſt breath, my beſt wiſhes.

Another circumſtance that ſtruck me forcibly enough, was our mode of land carriage, by cars, which appeared to me moſt diſgraceful, poor, mean-looking machines. Ireland and Spain are the only kingdoms in Europe that uſe cars in common; and Spain is ſurely a bad example to follow in any thing. How much better is the Engliſh cart and waggon; I almoſt take off my hat as I paſs by a broad wheel waggon, with its team of eight, ſometimes ten ſtout, ſtrong horſes, their chime of bells, &c.; there is ſomething majeſtic in it. How unlike our little carts with ſmall ſhabby horſes; and I am withall perfectly convinced, a more profitable, and more œconomical mode of conveyance; for theſe waggons are conducted by one man, or at moſt by a man and a boy; whereas, I have often ſeen, in Ireland, a man to each car. Is not this a great waſte of time, hands, and labour? I wiſh much to ſee

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waggons and carts ſubſtituted in Ireland, inſtead of cars; but this, with all other good things, will be produced by an Union.

The inns, in Ireland, want much reform, they are, for the moſt part, very bad indeed, I never ſaw worſe except in Spain and Portugal; the beſt inns in the world are in England, in ſome inſtances like little palaces. Good inns are of great public uſe and advantage; they are eſſential to our happineſs, pleaſure, conveniency, and even to our health. I wiſh ſomething was done towards their amelioration.

I ſhall juſt mention one other circumſtance as a great defect in Ireland, and the more to be lamented, where the natural ſituation of the country, the ſuperficies are moſt beautiful, a fine irregularity and diverſity of grounds, very few flats, and a juſt medium between hill and dale; yet with all theſe advantages, it is for the greater part very

very thinly planted, in many places totally devoid of trees. I wiſh plantations were more encouraged and promoted, which to effect, I do not know a better method than to oblige every man who makes a ditch, to quick it, and plant a foreſt tree at every ten or twenty feet, which, in a few years, would have a fine woody appearance, indeed look like an extenſive foreſt, yet no waſte of ground. The hedge-row elms of England is one of its moſt diſtinguiſhing features and greateſt ornaments. I know nothing that more fully comprehends or better blends together the *utile dulci*, than plantations.

I have now done; my reader will rejoice, and I am not ſorry. I have thrown in my mite, which, if it ſhould be attended with the ſmalleſt advantage to my native land, or to the empire at large, I am overpaid; I otherwiſe, as very poſſibly may be the caſe,

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and that this little eſſay is whole nugatory and of no avail, the loſs alone is mine, of juſt ſo much time, ink, and paper.

P. S. On the ſubject of commerce, as relative to the Union, I earneſtly recommend to my reader the peruſal of four pamphlets lately publiſhed as the ſpeeches of Lords Auckland, Minto, and Sheffield, and Mr. Peel, men of known abilities and great commercial knowledge; they have there very fully evinced the many advantages in trade that will accrue to Ireland by an Union. I am told their arguments on the ſubject are irrefragable, and their reaſonings unanſwerable.

London,
September, 1799.

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